

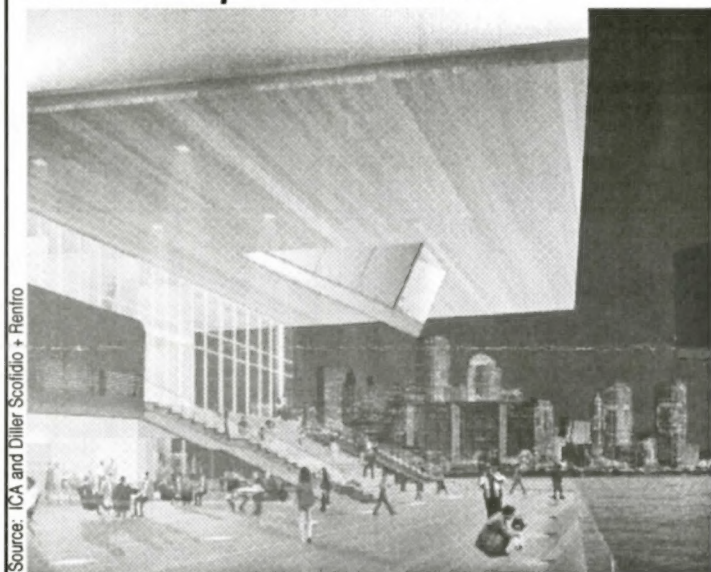
THE BOSTON INFORMER

No. 74

The newsletter for people who care about Boston

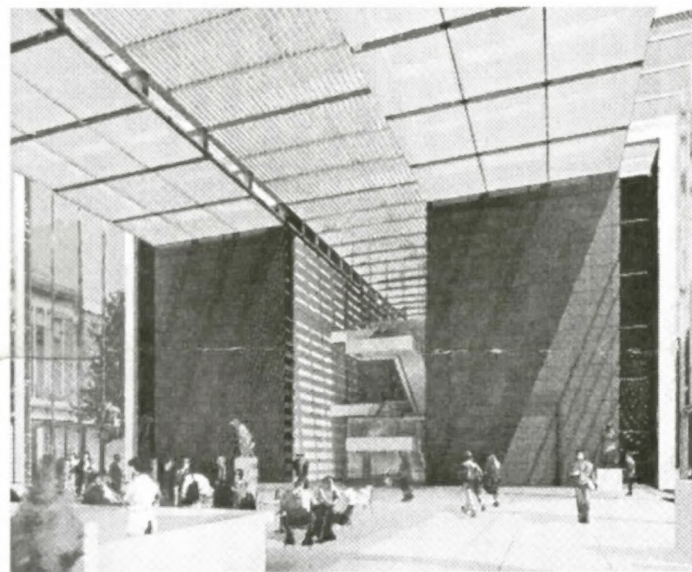
January–February 2006

Museum Expansion in Boston



Source: ICA and Diller Scofidio + Renfro

The **Institute of Contemporary Art's** new building on the Fan Pier will be three times bigger than its current facility and will feature a performing arts theater, educational facilities, media and technology center, bookstore and restaurant. Opening in September 2006.



Source: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The **Museum of Fine Arts** broke ground in November on its major expansion project that will add 22 percent more square feet. Two new pavilions for the American Wing will be built for the museum's fifth major expansion since 1909.

Museums are growing—Museums and cultural institutions are keeping architects and contractors busy in Boston. And private support for museums and the arts is strong even if per capita public revenue for Boston art agencies is a paltry 21 cents, among the smallest of comparable cities (The Boston Foundation reports that San Francisco's arts funding per capita is \$28). Below is a sample of current museum projects:

■ **Museum of Fine Arts** — The \$500 million expansion project involves demolishing the existing East Wing and replacing it with two new pavilions of the American Wing (North, South and Central American Art) and covering the spine of the museum with 70-foot-high glass roof. The museum, which moved to Huntington Avenue from Copley Square in 1909, will grow from 532,000 s.f. to 681,000 s.f. and the now-closed entrance on the Fenway will be reopened. About \$350 million has already been raised. Attendance in 2005 was 1.1 million. The project is expected to be done in 2010. Architects: Foster and Partners of London with Boston's CBT.

■ **The Institute of Contemporary Art** is currently building a new \$62 million, 65,000-s.f., two-story museum on the Fan Pier next to Pier 4 restaurant. The new building—the first new museum built in Boston in 100 years—will be about three times bigger than the ICA's existing building at 955 Boylston St. in the Back Bay. About \$53 million has been raised, including the selling price of the Back Bay building. The new museum is scheduled to open in September 2006. Architect: Diller Scofidio + Renfro of New York.

■ **The Children's Museum** will start construction in early 2006 of a \$45 million expansion and renovation. A 23,000-s.f. building will be added to the existing 150,000 s.f. complex, and the area in front of the museum will be landscaped and connected to the new Children's Wharf Park, built by the MBTA as mitigation for construction of the Silver Line tunnel. The expected completion date is late 2007. Attendance at The Children's Museum in 2005 was 440,000. Architect: Cambridge Seven Associates Inc., with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, landscape architects.

■ **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** is in the pre-design phase of adding a building behind the Museum on Palace Road in the Fenway to house the Program for Creativity where artists, scholars and educators will be able to collaborate. The architect is Renzo Piano Building Workshop of Genoa and Paris.

■ **The New Center for the Arts and Culture** and the **Boston Museum** are two proposals designated for Parcels 18 and 12, respectively, on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway. Both projects are in fundraising mode. The \$80 million, 67,200-s.f. New Center will feature a performance theater; museum-quality galleries; hands-on exploration areas; cultural cafe; and rooftop terrace. It has a tentative completion date of late 2010. Architect: Daniel Libeskind. The schedule for the \$90 million, 125,000-s.f. Boston Museum, described as "part museum of history and part theater" for visitors and residents, depends on fundraising. Architect: Moshe Safdie.

People Movers

Margaret O'Meara, from H.W. Lochner to Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas.
Joe Allegro, from H.W. Lochner to Allegro Construction Services.
Anne Collins, from director of Division of Professional Licensure to Registrar of Motor Vehicles.
Joe Cassazza, Boston Public Works Commissioner, is retiring after 37 years.
Paul L. McCann, executive assistant to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) director, is retiring after 47 years at the Authority.
Jay Russo has resigned as deputy director of the BRA.
Susan Hartnett, has resigned as head of Boston Cultural Affairs.
Paul Christian is retiring as Boston Fire Commissioner after 38 years with the Boston Fire Department.
Beth Leonard, former campaign worker for Sen. John Kerry, has been appointed chief of staff at the BRA.
Deerin Babb-Brott to director of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office after serving as acting director since March 2005.
Truman Henson, from CZM's Cape Cod regional coordinator to CZM's Project Review coordinator.
Sergeant Phil Terenzi was appointed the new Boston Harbor master.
Nick Haney, formerly at the BRA, is now at Intercontinental Real Estate.
Ken Petraglia, from HDR Engineering to BETA Group.
John Nucci, from Suffolk Superior Court clerk to vice-president of government and community affairs at Suffolk University.
Steven Falbel, from TranSystems Corp. back to CTPS.
Ned Codd, from Rizzo Associates to Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), Office of Transportation Planning.
Tony DiSarcina, formerly at Cambridge Systematics, is now at Howard/Stein-Hudson.
Steve Woelfel, from MBTA Planning to EOT, Office of Transportation Planning.
Peter C. Calcaterra, from MBTA Planning to EOT, Office of Transportation Planning.

Hub Ticket Development — Surprise, surprise. Plans for the Hub Ticket trailer site at the "gateway to the Theatre District" at Stuart and Tremont streets have changed dramatically since Amherst Media was selected in August 2005 to build a three-story building featuring a restaurant, bar and "cultural" space.

Not only have the two competing teams joined, but also the proposed new development bears little resemblance to what the Boston Redevelopment Authority gushed over last year. Gone are the bar/club and Wang Center's Young at Arts program. In are 54 studio and one-bedroom apartments in an 11-story building, just two stories lower than Abbott Real Estate Development, originally the bypassed team, proposed in 2005.

MBTA Abolishes Planning Department — The MBTA no longer does transit planning. In accordance with requirements of Chapter 196 of the Acts of 2004—the "emergency law" that dropped "construction" from Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOT) and mandated "reforms and improvements to the commonwealth's transportation system"—the MBTA is no longer responsible for planning large-scale projects. The new Office of Transportation Planning in EOT has taken over key MBTA planning projects including the Green Line Extension to Medford; North Shore transit improvements; and the Urban Ring. Service planning and parking expansion planning remain with the MBTA. The MBTA Planning Department has been renamed MBTA Development.

Two MBTA staff moved to EOT to help the EOT folks—typically from the highway realm—differentiate a trolley bus from a trolley and work on transit planning. One major MBTA project, the Silver Line Phase III, while technically in design, not planning, is actually in planning and remains an MBTA project as everyone is searching for a portal location. EOT Secretary Cogliano tried to take control of the Silver Line Phase III recently by proposing a bad plan to run the Silver Line in traffic to a portal on Essex Street. What this major shift means for serious transit planning such as the Urban Ring is unclear.

East Boston

Somerville

Cambridge

Letter from a New Orleans Levee

"I have just returned (12/5) from New Orleans where I spent 55 days @12 hours/day supervising 500 persons who in turn were supervising the debris removal. I went down on 10/12 with a firm (Alpha Corporation) specializing in construction management...It was truly a great experience; however, the back-drop was a great tragedy: working on location where 700,000+ people lost most of their personal possessions and most had their homes heavily damaged and, possibly, 100,000 homes destroyed or heavily damaged by flood water. What is most compelling is the one-quarter of a million former residents, now absentees.

Ironically, the flooding in New Orleans would not have occurred if the levees had been constructed properly. Unfortunately, it may take years to ascertain the agency responsibility, assign future responsibility, provide necessary funding, and implement all infrastructure necessary for protection against future flooding. In the meantime, the "Catch-22" syndrome will stymie all recovery efforts for years to come (i.e., the lending institutions cannot risk investments without fail-safe flood protection in-place).

By-the-way: Extensive damage was caused by the tsunami-effect of the tidal surge of Katrina, south and east of New Orleans, all the way to Mobile, AL. This damage was probably the most extensive surge damage of any previous hurricane in US history.

So much for my retirement—I wasn't ready for it anyway!"

Chan Rogers

Chan Rogers is a professional engineer who spent most of his career in Boston building and removing the Central Artery, among many, many projects.

Avenir/Canal Place

Avenir, formerly Canal Place, is likely to be the first building on the Rose Kennedy Greenway on Parcel 1A at Canal and Causeway streets. The MBTA designated Trinity Financial to develop a 10-story, 248-unit condominium project with retail and 121 parking spaces on the second and third floors. Construction may start in summer 2006. Architect: ICON architecture. The MBTA chose Hines Raymond to develop its other parcel (2B).

MassPike controls five Bulfinch Triangle parcels (1, 1B, 2, 2A, 2C) but has designated a developer for only one, Parcel 1. Bounded by Causeway, Haverhill and Beverly streets and Valenti Way, Parcel 1 will be developed by Simpson Housing LLP as a 10-story, 243 rental apartment complex with 17,000 s.f. of retail and

137 parking spaces. Construction is expected to start in summer 2007. Architect: ADD Inc. Because of the split designation process and MassPike's delay designating developers, the final outcome of when and where a supermarket will be built is unclear.



Avenir on Canal Street at Banknorth Garden

Source: Trinity Financial and ICON architecture

What They're Saying

"One problem in Boston is that zoning gets no respect. We were so enthusiastic in the '90s when we rezoned all of Boston. To my horror, I discovered that, even with updated zoning, a developer can make a proposal that might be totally unrelated to the zoning but would still be taken seriously at City Hall. No one would demand that the project be withdrawn and resubmitted to conform to the height or density restrictions.

"If we even had guidelines, we might be better off. But it's a problem when a 300-foot building appears on a site that's zoned for a 100 feet or less, on a corner that's very busy, on narrow downtown streets, with a 500-car parking garage beneath it."

Joan Goody, Principal, Goody Clancy Associates

Boston Informer Predictions for 2006!

- ◆ **Storrow Drive** will be shut down while the tunnel is rebuilt, with traffic relocated to the Charles River via Duck Tours and Bailey Bridges. Simultaneously, the Southeast Expressway will be repaved now that the Big Dig is almost complete.
- ◆ **Fred Salvucci** ponders run for governor as an independent, pushing for Big Dig to continue.
- ◆ **Amtrak**, in severe financial distress, runs passenger trains by hooking them to freight trains. Passengers are categorized as freight, so fares are calculated by weight. Since this is an incentive for passengers to lose weight, Amtrak is given funding by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- ◆ The **MBTA**, desperate for revenue, takes advantage of the new stored-value CharlieTicket and begins charging a fee to use escalators and elevators.

- ◆ **Detour signs** at Copley Square installed for the Kerry election-night rally will be removed.



- ◆ **Fan Pier** development is delayed as new developer misses the economic cycle again. Weakening condominium and hotel markets are to blame.
- ◆ A new **museum** is planned for the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, fast becoming Boston's museum row. An interactive parking museum where motorists drive right in, circle endlessly and squeeze into a tiny space will give a unique Boston experience.
- ◆ Due to delays completing the Big Dig, **trees** grown in nurseries to be installed on the Greenway are too large to transplant safely, so the Big Dig will be forced to substitute scrawny two-inch caliper trees.
- ◆ The **Mass. Convention Center Authority**, attempting to boost the anemic number of events at the new So. Boston Convention Center, will have a new **direct Turnpike ramp** built to connect it with the Hynes Convention Center in Back Bay.

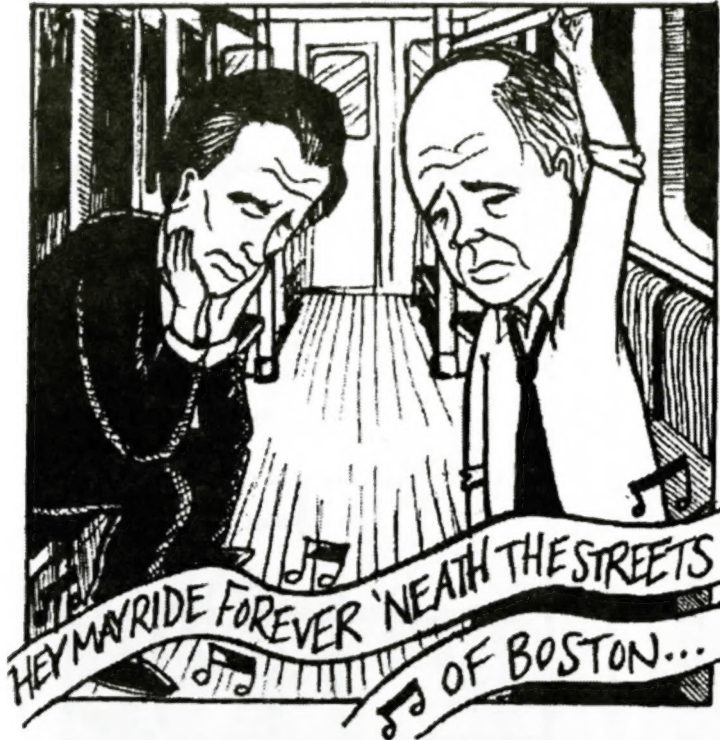
Welcome to The Boston Informer

The goal is simple: provide concise public information on construction projects, planning initiatives, and whatever else affects living and working in Boston. Welcome to *The Boston Informer*!

The Boston Informer is published by ATC Information, Inc., six times yearly in Boston, Massachusetts. President: Anthony Casendino; vice-presidents, Anne McKinnon, Chris Fincham.

The Boston Informer is available by mail only. \$25.00 per year (cheap!). Questions? Telephone (617) 723-7030, fax (617) 437-1886 or e-mail: BostonInformer@cs.com. Check us out on the web at www.bostoninformer.com!

News flash: Gov. Romney and MBTA GM Grabauskas don't ride the MBTA regularly.



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Romney: "This ridiculous CharlieTicket is a tax. Abolish it."

Grabauskas: "It's not a tax—it's an intelligence test."

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You Were Asking

- Q. Will any of the proposed buildings on the Rose Kennedy Greenway (YMCA, Boston Museum, New Center for Arts and Culture) to be covered by highway ramps be built without financial or other aid from MassPike?
- A. At a recent meeting, Peter Meade, chair of the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, said he strongly urged MassPike to provide assistance or some of the proposals may not be built.
- Q. Last October, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) put out a Request for Proposals to develop, coordinate and implement a "Walk to Fame" in the Theatre District. What was proposed?
- A. Although proposals were due December 12, 2005, at press time, the BRA was still deciding between two proposals.
- Q. Mayor Menino announced in March 2005 that he was offering a \$25,000 prize through an international competition for concepts for events to mark the opening of the Greenway and Crossroads. Has the prize been awarded?
- A. The whole idea was dropped and replaced with paid consultants and community focus groups to come up with ideas.
- Q. I'm confused. The MBTA changed the unlimited-use monthly pass to a CharlieTicket, which is a stored-value ticket. Why?
- A. Actually, it appears the MBTA is confused. The monthly pass is not a CharlieTicket. The unlimited-use monthly pass will always exist and should never be confused with a CharlieTicket that deducts money every time it's used.
- Q. Bicycling magazine—for the third time—rated Boston one of the worst cities for cycling. Does anyone at City Hall care?
- A. Apparently not.

